412 (*eché*), hoe (*asron*), machete (*machit*), coa (*luk*), and digging stick (*avutel*). In a 243 few towns (Amatenango), where lands are [409] flat, the plow is made of wood and pulled by oxen but only for wheat farming. During [415] corn planting, the seed is carried by the [824] planter in a *morral* hung from the shoulder, [237] in a gourd with a large spout, or in containers made of armadillo shells. The harvested crops are placed in deep baskets, made of reed-grass, or in big pita (*chojak*) [412] net bags. The ear of corn is cleared of its [239] husk by a sharp bone or a small deer horn.

322 412 The axe, machete, and knife are used in wood working, which is very rudimentary, though handsaw and hammer have a place. With these tools the Indians make doors, tables, seats, small benches, shelves. Blom [534] and LaFarge (1926–27, 2:351) add that the Tzeltal near Ocosingo also make violins of a shape similar to the European type, but they have no resonance and poor tone. They also manufacture pipes and combs roughly [463] finished. No village of this group has specialists in carpentry to compare with the Chamulas (Tzotzil-speaking), who supply furniture at low cost to San Cristobal de las Casas and other places of the area.

324 412 Stone carving requires a pickaxe with one end very sharp, the other very flat to serve as a hammer, and a short wooden handle. This is the tool used in Tenejapa for making metates. These metates have three legs, but Blom and LaFarge (1926–27, 2:338) mention metates without legs (Ocosingo municipio), which are made of volcanic stone found along the San Martin River. According to the Tzeltal of Oxchuc, the name of the metate is *chá*, its handle *kab-chá*.

412 An iron bar to break the ground, an axe, and a machete are the tools for building huts, chickencoops, sweat houses, and other small structures.

283 413 Another tool, used in the making of pita rope, is *karet*, which probably comes from the Spanish *carreta*. It consists of a wooden disc fixed to a tree trunk that is nailed to

[CP-206-A]

283 the ground. This disc has two hooks to
413 which the fiber is knotted; when the disc is turned by a crank, it braids the fibers into rope. A thick board, smoothed by a metal knife (manufactured by the Indians from iron pieces bought in the city), is used to scrape the pita and remove the fiber.

407 The most complex machine that the Tzel-
[177] tal own and build is the wooden cane press, which was imported by the Spaniards to grind sugarcane (fig. 6). This machine is operated by two men, who move the rollers by a handle (*kabal-té*) at each end of the
[415] machine. The juice pressed out by the rollers drops into fluted containers made of pieces of banana tree, and finally into a pot. This
293 juice is used in the preparation of an alcoholic beverage, *chicha* (*chi-ja*, 'sweet water'), and for panela. Chicha is prepared by
[415] fermenting this juice by bran, corn, or wheat, in a special container (*canoja*) made from a fluted tree trunk. The bran or other fermenting agent is *smé-chi-já* ('mother of
[184] the chicha'). Some communities (Tenejapa, Cancuc, Oxchuc) have greater preference for this beverage than other Tzeltal groups.

224 A gun has become very common in hunt-
411 ing. Sometimes (Oxchuc and Tenejapa)
[412] rabbits are taken by striking them with a coa, after cornering them with the aid of dogs. Blom and LaFarge (1926–27, 2:352) state that the Tzeltal of the lowlands usually hunt wild boar with long wooden spears with fire-hardened or metal points. Traps protect the milpa as well as snaring game.

41 Cooking utensils are mainly indigenous. The usual set consists of clay containers of varying size and shape, jícaras, baskets, wooden spoons, a comal, a metate, hooks, and wooden tripods for hanging items over
177 the fire. In the last few years metal pots,
404 dishes, frying pans, boiling pans, and espe-
415 cially handy *nixtamal* mills (which are gradually displacing the grinding stone)
177 have been introduced. Other items that
207 come from the city are flashlights, small
405 kerosene lamps, watches, scissors, and (in-
412 frequently) battery radios.
416 [P 206-B]

4: Villa Rojas E-4, 5 (1938-1944) 1969
NV9 Tzeltal NV9

Handcrafts

323 Among the few handcrafts practiced in
[462] the Tzeltal areas, ceramics, produced mainly
by women, is the most widespread. Tenango
[184] and Amatenango del Valle are the only
communities which have made a specialty
[439] of this craft. Tenango exports its products
through the northern zone. Amatenango
through the southern zone, including neigh-
323 boring Guatemalan villages. Both places use
/84 a similar ceramic technique but different
shape and ornamentation. Referring to
Amatenango del Valle, Blom and LaFarge
(1926–27, 2:396) state:

> The pottery, which is their chief product, is almost all of one shape, a sphere, with three handles and a narrow bottle-neck with a flat lip. The decoration does not vary. Both shape and design, however, are of considerable charm. The polish is fine and smooth, giving an even golden-red colour all over, with the decoration in a deep, reddish brown. No such fine, finished work is done by other tribes in the area. The pots are baked by placing them on a rectangle of boards, two or more meters square, around a hot fire. The woman in charge turns them
> [438] until they are done. These pots are carried by
> [439] the men as far as San Cristóbal, where they are redistributed, and to Nenton in Guatemala.

283 Another widespread craft is spinning and
286 weaving of fabrics for clothing. No village
[438] in the Tzeltal area trades these products because production barely meets their family needs. The backstrap loom of pre-Hispanic origin is the chief tool.

[184] Pita articles—ropes, bags, and nets to gather the harvest or carry loads—are mainly produced in Oxchuc and Cancuc.
322 In Cancuc wooden combs are also manu-
184 factured.

342 *Houses and Furniture*

Houses, from 3 to 5 m. on a side, are predominantly square with thatched roofs. The walls are wattle-and-daub on plain tree trunks tied with vines. Floors are of
[354] hardened earth. The houses only have one door and no windows, except in some vil-

[CP 207-A]

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Bachajón

necks and round bottoms. Two were full of corn and lime for tortillas, just off the fire. A big Tenango jar, *k'ip*, of the kind to be described at that place, was used for water.

A pottery dish, about 7 centimeters across, *tsets*, is commonly offered to guests to wash their hands. It is placed on a pottery stand of an hour-glass shape, about 15 centimeters high, *awaliko* (see fig. 299). The ordinary plates and general vessels are flat gourd dishes, *qai'*, about 20 centimeters across. Gourds as well were used for a dipper, *tuts*, and a water-jar, *tsus*. Two nets hung from the rack. There were three small baskets, *tutsmotc*, and four big ones, *mukulmotc*. Hanging on the wall were a pair of the basket-work sandals mentioned before, and selected ears of corn for seed. The wife's textile outfit, more fully described later, consisted of a spindle, *pětět*,

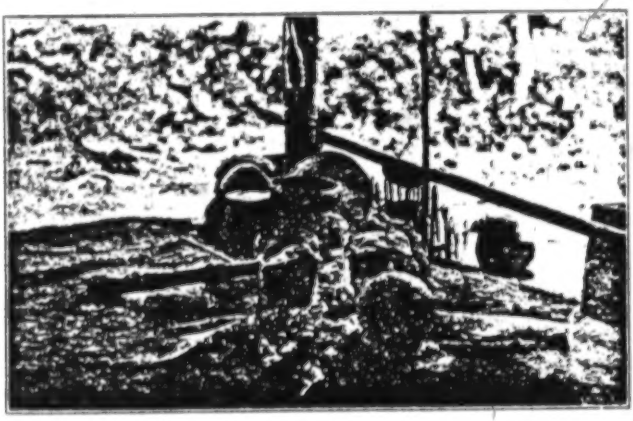

FIG. 281—Bachajon Fireplace.

with clay whorl, spun in a gourd bowl, *tsima*, cotton, *t'umin*, hanging in leaves, and the loom itself, *holčl*. A sling, made of a forked stick and rubber band with a leather piece to take the clay pellet, *finmutc*, belonged to the small boy. Bananas were drying on the rack. With them were laid, or hanging in packages of leaves, beeswax, *tcavek*, blocks, 20 x 20 x 2 centimeters, for trade purposes, used for making candles, a lump of hard red clay, *baq lum* ("bitter earth"), for washing the hair, and sometimes also eaten, a package of brown loaf sugar, salt, *atsam*, traded down from the Zotzil country, several packages of pimiento pepper, and serpent fat, *junto tcan*, for rubbing on the chest to cure coughs. Under the table was a basket of coarse, blackish-gray clay for making pottery, *tcavek lum* ("beeswax earth"). Five wild boars' jaws and an armadillo's tail

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Sivacá

286 126 123 Our Indian hostess at the Encanto house was commissioned to make us a sash: after observing and photographing the process (fig. 300), we bought the loom with the unfinished piece on it. At Sivacá the army of guides produced a woman who was weaving cloth, and another who was just preparing the thread for the loom (fig. 301). The former was very bored and matter-of-fact about the whole pro-

323

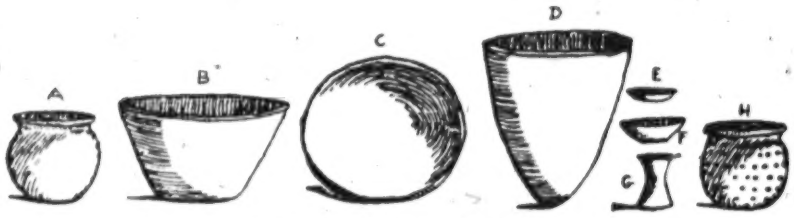

FIG. 299—Sivacá, Chis. Pottery Forms.

A. Ocom. C. Tsameta. E. Hutstahibe. G. Awaliko.
B. Pok'et. D. Hor'mo. F. Taeta. H. Teistcinaka.

286 126 123 ceeding, but the latter, a younger one, was at first frightened. At the first sight of me, she put away all her work. As she spoke no Spanish, I fell back upon a corps of seven or eight interpreters, who all spoke together while I looked as harmless as possible. Then she thought that the Mayor of Ocosingo, or the President of Mexico, or some one had sent for her, and packed her things to travel. At last she understood, and then balked. The men explained to me, with some amusement, that she was ashamed—"*dice que tiene verguenza*".— but finally she consented to pose. The result was a picture worth the while; she herself was a good type of young Indian woman, on her back was slung a pretty though somewhat grimy baby, while an underfed puppy and very small chicken completed the family group. The picture also shows a good example of the squatting-seat mentioned when listing the contents of the Encanto house (see fig. 301).

[286] [291] [142] [302] [516] ←

FIG. 300—El Encanto, Chis. Woman Weaving.

283 The spindle, *pětět*, is a stick 35 centimeters long, at the foot of which is a clay whorl, for which no name was given. It is spun with the weighted end resting in a gourd bowl, the upper end held against

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Sivacá

the thigh. The spinning is done with the left hand, the right holding and drawing out the thread, *tsahalna'* (fig. 302-d).

The thread is then arranged for the warp on a form called *kumen* (fig. 302-c). This is a pole 1.40 meters long, notched at intervals on one side, and with a groove in one end joining two unnotched sides. In one of the notches, according to the length of thread desired, is placed a cross stick, *tumin-te,* (equals *kumen-te?*), 45 centimeters long. The thread is laid from one end of this cross stick, through the groove, around to the other end of the cross stick, and so, back and forth, until the required number of woof-strands are prepared. The loops around one half of the cross stick are then transferred to the head-stick of the loom, those around the other to the foot-stick, and the woof is ready. At the head end, the loops are braided for the selvage.

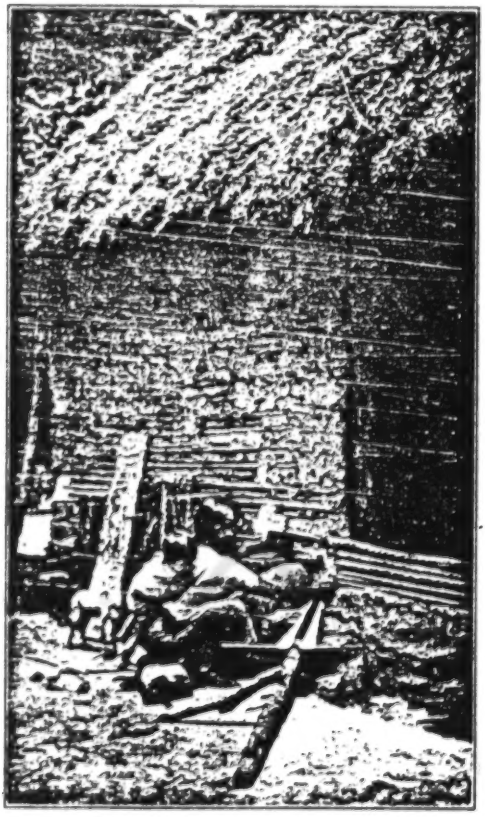

FIG. 301—Sivacá, Chia. Woman Winding Thread.

The loom, *holël,** has no rigid frame. The woof is stretched over the head and foot-sticks, *wolol-te.* The head-stick is fastened to a beam in the house or to a branch, usually more than a meter above the ground. Before this the weaver sits, with the foot-stick strapped to her by a broad leather strap, *ku'epat,* thus holding the set-up taut (fig. 303). At a little distance below the head-stick, the woof-strands are crossed, those underneath being carried on top, and held in place

*_holël_ is one of a large class of words ending in _-al, -ël,_ or _-il,_ which are at once verbal nouns and infinitives; e. g. _tal-ël,_ to come, or the act of coming, corresponding to the Latin _venire_ and _veniendo. hol-ël_ primarily means to weave, here it is also applied to the loom.

5: Blom & LaFarge A,E-4,5 (1925) 1927 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Sivacá

by a stick called *wolol-te* at El Encanto, and *ibal-te* at Sivacá. The former name was probably obtained through faulty questioning, as it is also applied to the head and foot-sticks. *Wolol-* may be derived from *lol-*, in which case the word would simply mean "stick for weaving" (*-te*, "stick, tree, wood"), and would be applicable to any part of the loom. Below these two is a heddle, *yolala*, attached by

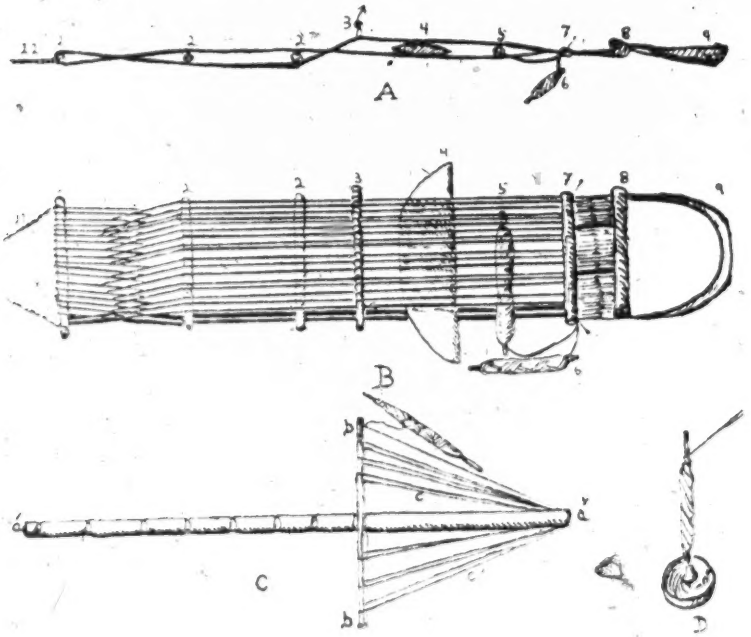

FIG. 203—Weaving Implements.

A. Side view of loom.
1. Wolol-te.
2. Ibal-te.
3. Heddle, yolala
4. Batten, halawil-te.
5. Shuttle, tiomal.
6. Shuttle, tiomal.
7. Wolol-te.
8. Wolol-te.
9. Ku'epat.
B. Top view of loom.
C. Kumen.
a. Notched end.
b. Tumen-te.
c. Warp strands.
D. Spindle.

cotton loops to the lower set of warp-strings. Below this is sometimes set another separating stick, *tsutuhil*. The pounding batten, *halawil-te*, is inserted at this point. At Sivacá a wooden comb *ibalib* was also used. As the woven part becomes long, it is rolled up around the foot-stick, thus keeping the work easily within the weaver's reach. That part which is woven but not rolled up is held

7: Nash E-5 (1957-1967) 1970 NV9 Tzeltal NV9
Amatenango del Valle

dies, the owner announces on the loudspeaker of the local bars that he will sell meat at 5 pesos a portion. He preserves the hide to make saddle packs and tumplines. But the loss is great because he will not be able to buy a new bull with what he earns. If the bull lives, he will be better in three weeks and can carry loads. It is a very dangerous operation since the scrotum of a bull is very large. It is easier with a horse.

Surrounding the event with a ceremonial complex minimizes the development of commercialized relations between the caponizer and the owner. Most men who acquire several head of cattle or horses eventually learn to do the task themselves.

Handicrafts performed by men include rope-making from the tails of horses or from plant fibers, and weaving net bags. Most of the men who are assigned to the civil hierarchy spend their spare time in the cabildo making these items.

Carpentry is a skill now being practiced by two Indians of the town who "just learned by watching." They are called upon to help people in constructing the house frame, for which they receive 50 pesos in wages. A Ladino living on the margin of the town is a full-time specialist with his own shop. In addition to supervising house construction, he makes furniture and caskets to order.

New Economic Enterprises

In the operation of the new enterprises, which include cattle raising, cooperative ownership of a store, bars, and trucks, and liquor distilling, several patterns of organization have emerged. Some of these are based on preexisting social groupings, while others represent innovations. The social resources of management, credit operations, and the development of new skills within these local enterprises are of significance in preparing Indians for new occupations in the wider society.

Cattle raising. The most traditional organization is found in the case of cattle raising. Cattle have been in the town at least as far back as the 1915 revolutionary period when informants indicate that most of the